F
1235
B84

BRINSMADE

MEXICAN PROBLEMS

BANCROFT
LIBRARY

The Bancroft Library

University of California • Berkeley

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/mexicanproblems00brinrich

MEXICAN PROBLEMS

By

ROBERT BRUCE BRINSMADE

M. C. ROLLAND

(1916?)

ciendas" had truly reached the "minimum of subsistence" of the classical economists; had he received one cent less, he would have starved. In the meantime, his wife, poorly fed, ignorant, without money to buy milk, perceived that only the stronger children could be expected to survive infancy.

This increase in the price of food was due partly to better railway communications between local markets, partly to the depreciation of silver, partly to the failure of production to equal that

from the railroad they were caught and if the first and second attempts resulted simply in a beating, the third meant two years in the army.

Although he called himself a "liberal" in the beginning, shortly after his accession to power in 1876, Porfirio Diaz converted himself into the voluntary instrument of the land-holders and speculators who managed the Conservative Party.

He perfected the body of Rurales for the capture of the slaves, and found it most useful for the "adjustment" of in-

The Tracts on the Hills are Cultivated by the Peons Who Are Expelled From the Fertile Valleys, Which Are Owned by the Big Land-holders

of population, since the feudal landholders were too lazy to place under cultivation a larger extent of the land they owned than was necessary for securing the customary income without personal inconvenience or effort of any kind.

As the "haciendados" refused to increase salaries while the price of necessities rose, the peon, conquered by hunger, was forced to escape and try to secure work in the mines or in the cities. The inhabitants of the farms near the railway were often successful in their flight; but in sections farther

dustrial strikes, by means of the simple process of consigning the "leaders" of the latter to the army or to the grave. In order to replace the peons who escaped from the "haciendas" situated in the highlands, and to obtain new victims for the inhuman conditions of tropical agriculture existing in Yucatan and in the Valle Nacional, the system of "enganche" was installed with the help of the Rurales. The "shanghaing" of the free Indians in order to condemn them to a frightful slavery was well described in the year 1910 by G. K. Turner in his work

"Barbarous Mexico", and by E. Alex Powell in "The Betrayal of a Nation", published serially in The American Magazine.

A condition of ignorance and slavery without hope, joined to insufficient nourishment (Bulletin of the United States Department of Labor, No. 38, 1912, Washington, D. C.) leads naturally to irresponsibility and to leaning towards drunkenness and certain landowners organized this tendency in Mexico in order to profit by it. Owing to its easy cultivation and large production every eight years, the maguey is attractive for the lazy landowner, and immense expanses of land have been given over to this cultivation especially around the City of Mexico. The greater part of the farmers who cultivate this plant are connected with the "Compania Explotadora de Pulques," which is a trust for the sale at retail of "pulque" in the Cities. The group of rascally "pulqueros" as well as the distillers of liquors, have prevented the police from exerting due control over the sale of liquors; at least in one instance, in the town of Pachuca, it has prevented the establishment of an adequate water system for several years, with the object of increasing the sale of liquors. The result of such antisocial dealings has been almost absolute licentiousness through entire sections, for example the workmen of cities such as Pachuca, Mexico City, and Puebla. The greatest obstacle to the success of the manufacturers in many Mexican cities is the degeneration of the workmen who through vice have lost the sense of honesty, and loyalty, and now lack application to work, the strength to think, and the ambition to succeed, that is, the qualities which distinguish man from the brute.

As instruction is not conducive to the success of a system of slavery, it is natural that the "hacendados" should oppose any attempt to educate their peons. Public schools in the rural districts were not only few and far between under the rule of Diaz, but also inadequate, as is demonstrated by the actual personal experience of Luis Cabrera ("La Reconstitución de los Ejidos," a speech by Luis Cabrera, Chamber of Deputies México, D. F., December 3, 1912), who was a schoolmaster in Tlaxcala in the year 1895. Although he was paid by the government, when he arrived at the "hacienda," he was furnished with the following instructions by the shameless manager of the farm: "You must teach here only reading, writing, and the Catholic catechism. I forbid you absolutely to teach arithmetic and that useless thing called civics." Perhaps it was the fear lest some knowledge of the real principles of government might spread throughout the country, which moved the future reactionary autocrat to exile in 1878, Gabine Barreda, Director of the National Preparatory School of Mexico City, and one of the most notable educators in the Republic.

Free preaching and reading was forbidden completely; all newspapers and books, even scientific works, were censored; and the works of foreign democratic reformers, including Henry George, could not be sold in Mexico. A complete Machiavellism was in existence and the Diaz system represented a modern edition of the criminal tyranny of Caesar Borgia. But the coterie which surrounded Diaz aimed to please foreigners, the purchasers of public bonds and of the natural resources stolen from the nation or from the natives. In order to maintain the myth of Diaz (The Mexican Struggle for Freedom, by G. de Lara & Pichon, United States) the foreign press was prodigally subsidized, both at home and abroad; and this was done so skillfully, that many of the foreigners residing here, **even at the present date,** echo the declaration of Terry, (Guidebook for México, by T. P. Terry, México, D. F.), inspired by self-interest, that "Porfirio Diaz was the most eminent Mexican."

The final result of hunger, oppression, ignorance, and vice, fostered by unlimited land monopoly, was the social Revolution of 1910. This revolt was much more far-reaching and violent than any of its predecessors, due to the participation of the free Indians in it. In former struggles, the latter had shown but little interest; but the spoliation of which they were made victims with regard to the "egidos" (commons), especially since 1893, had reduced them from the class of self-supporting owners of land to that of landless indigents. And, therefore, they rose by the thousands when the image of Diaz, though covered with a coat of mail, was smashed to pieces by the onset of Madero. The President-martyr did not originate the Revolution, whatever unreflecting people may think; he was merely the Apostle who gave expression to the suffering and the aspirations of the oppressed masses.

The History of the Mexican Land Question

By ROBERT BRUCE BRINSMADE

Mining Engineer, born in New York in 1871—He has been living in Mexico since 1911 and is perfectly acquainted with conditions there.

> "Man oppressed by an unjust law is not a free man. The individual has his natural rights, of which he cannot be despoiled by the nation, except through violence, through the illicit use of armed force. This truth can never be sufficiently emphasized, in view of the scant attention paid to it even by the most zealous partisans of liberty."—Turgot.

The recent triumph of the Liberal or Popular Party in Mexico, after almost 4 years of struggle, presents a unique opportunity for the carrying of certain economic changes which will destroy forever the dangerous political power of those egotistical groups composed of big landowners, who up to now have maintained the working classes in a state of slavery and ignorance. It is only recently that the conspiracy of silence in regard to the monopoly of the land,—the censurable policy of Porfirio Diaz and of Huerta—was broken; and as there are still many educated people in the Mexican Federation who are not acquainted with the facts in the case, I shall dedicate this chapter to the history of the land.

As the Mexican Indians in the XVII. Century were pagans, like all other races who were not Christian, they lost all their rights in this world, and their country was presented by Pope Alexander VI to the Spanish Crown. When Hernan Cortez disembarked in Mexico he found the Aztecs and their neighbors in the middle period of barbarism ("Ancient Society" by Daniel H. Morgan, U. S.) with their government based on personal authority and not in accordance with territorial belongings; and the private ownership of land in the modern sense of the word was absolutely unknown. These conditions facilitated the distribution by the Spanish conquerors in 1521, of the productive Mexican valleys into farms among themselves.

A large number of Indians were distributed with the farms, in the character of feudal serfs, while others, in "herds", were converted into slaves to work in the mines and build public roads. This system of slavery was maintained by means of an army levied in Spain, which repressed a population which was at that time about one-half of what it is at the present. The Indians not enslaved were finally pacified by the concession of "ejidos" (commons) (**Problemas Nacionales,** by Lic. Andrés Molina Enríquez, México, D.F.) about half a century after the Conquest.

The humane law of the "ejidos" was decreed by Philip II in 1573, and had as an object to protect the rest of the free Indians from the cupidity and cruelty of the Spanish colonists. An "ejido" comprised approximately one "sitio," that is, a square Spanish league, but as the country had not been surveyed, all concessions of lands were subject, according to the royal decree, to certain lines drawn between natural fixed landmarks, such as hills. mountains or rivers. Thus, every nominal "sitio" always included several leagues, twenty in many cases. Although many of these "ejido" lands were second class and even worse, they generally comprised large areas and were so varied that having pasturage, arable and wooded sections, they were amply sufficient to provide occupation and nourishment to the Indians to whom they were allotted.

There existed, therefore, during the

colonial period, two kinds of agricultural Indians: The peons, enslaved in the "haciendas," and the free ones, who owned the "ejidos." The latter might work on the farms during the harvest, but they were economically independent of the "hacendados." A third class, that of the hunter Indians, was never very numerous, and it was confined to the Northern deserts or the tropical woods along the coasts ("Mexico and its Social Evolution," by Lic. D. G. Raigosa, México, D. F.)

At the present time, the actual population of Mexico is thus divided: 43% mestizos, 19% Spaniards and Creoles, and 38% Indians ("Guide-book for Mexico," by F. P. Terry, México, D. F.). Even at the beginning of the War of Independence, in 1810, the mestizos were very numerous, and they formed the discontented part of the population. Because, disinherited by their Spanish fathers for the benefit of their half-brothers the Creoles, they had too high aspirations to be satisfied with living beside the people to which their Indian mothers belonged, and they were restricted to low and poorly paid work.

The first revolution in 1810, that is to say, Hidalgo's revolution, was a democratic movement, and aimed at the annihilation of the fuedal system of the farms, as well as the shaking off of the Spanish domination. This revolt was headed by the Liberal party, or the mestizos, and failed in its economic aim because when Independence was finally attained, in 1821, it was under the auspices of the conservative party, the party of Emperor Iturbide and the Creole farmers.

During the first four decades of independence, there were four economic parties: the Creole land-holders, the Church, the mestizos, and the Indians. As the consummation of Independence had benefited the Creoles only, who took hold of all positions vacated through the expulsion of the Spaniards, the Mestizos were more discontented than ever, and were constantly at war with the conservative party. The fact that the free Indians had never been educated or nationalized, and that they preserved their tribal differences of custom and dialect, made it easy for political adventurers to recruit them as "cannon fodder," so that they should fight one another with arms in their hands instead of at the polls.

The Liberals had little success until the year 1856, when President Comonfort decreed the Laws of Mortization, by virtue of which the farms belonging to the Church (which constituted the best lands in Mexico), were nationalized and sold. These lands were acquired for the greater part, by new Creoles or white immigrants not Spaniards, who had made fortunes working the mines or in trade, from the time when the prohibition relative to immigration, decreed in 1821, was abrogated. As most of the "haciendas" that had belonged to the Church were sold without being divided, the transfer did not affect feudalism; it merely suppressed the clerical incubus while giving full dominion to the secular Creoles of the Conservative party.

The Laws of Reform ("Código de la Reforma," by Blas J. R. Alatorre, México, D. F.), of Benito Juarez, decreed between the years 1857 and 1873, put an end to the last privileges of the Church, so that since then the Church has had only an indirect influence in economic and political matters. Unhappily, however, as Article 27 of the Federal Constitution ("Constitución Política de los Estados Unidos Mexicanos," by Lic. F. P. García, México, D. F.) prohibits rural Indians as well as the Church from owning productive lands, the division of the commons into individual ranches became obligatory.

The partition of the commons progressed very slowly during several years, since the Indians opposed it and the plots of land resulting from such division were too small to awaken the cupidity of speculators. One of the beneficial results of this re-apportionment was that it made it possible for the mestizos as well as for the Indians, to secure small ranches, the products of which are at present an important factor in the market. One of its bad effects, which has spread considerably, particularly since 1870, is that it permits the incorporation of the best sections of the commons with the farms near-by, as the title of ownership to these commons has been acquired by the farmers, either by force or by deceit. Thus numerous "poblados" (congregations of Indians) have lost the greater part of the productive land, and are in possession of only their inalienable legal communal property, as an oasis within the "hacienda."

In the year 1910, at the beginning of the last Revolution, the ownership and the value of Mexican lands was as follows:

Kinds of Land	Area Square kilmts.	%
11,000 "Haciendas"	880,000	44
18 "Land Companies"....	80,000	4
Other Land Companies...	120,000	6
"Sitios" and "commons"..	120,000	6
Small ranches.....	400,000	20
National Lands.....	400,000	20
Total Rural property.....2.000,000		100

Kind of Lands	Value per sq. kl.	Total value (Mexican currency)
11,000 "Haciendas"..	$2,500	$2,200.000,000
18 "Land Companies"	1,000	80.000,000
Other Land Companies	1,000	120,000,000
"Sitios" and "commons"	1,000	120.000,000
Small ranches	4,000	1,600.000,000
National Lands.....	Not valued	.....
Total Rural property		$4,120.000,000

This table shows a concentration of property which is surprising: 11,000 haciendas embrace 44% of the total area of the country, and the best lands at that. The average area of these farms is about 80 square kilometers (8,000 hectares), the equivalent of three square Spanish leagues. When, as is often the case, one person owns several farms, his holdings constitute a colossal amount.

In this way, therefore, Luis Terrazas, in Chihuahua, owns about 60,000 square kilometers, a larger area than that contained in all Costa Rica; and the Central Mexican Railway in Hidalgo traverses thirty leagues of land belonging to José Escandón. The estates of Lorenzo Torres, in Sonora; of the Gurza brothers, in Durango; of "Los Cedros," in Zacatecas; of Iñigo Noriega, in the State of Mexico; of García Pimentel, in Morelos; of Juventino Ramírez, in Puebla; and of the Madero family, in Coahuila; are a few of the many examples which could be quoted of enormous family estates throughout the country.

The estates of the eighteen more important land companies average 4,444 square kilometers each, that is to say, about one half of the area of Portugal;

Mexican Agricultural Peons in the High Plateaux of Mexico, Piling Hay

while about a dozen other companies are in possession of ten per cent (10%) of the total area, that is to say, one half of what is owned by the small farmers, and about 67% more than the land which constitutes communal property.

The whole free population of Mexico is, therefore, restricted to practically one-fourth of the total area, and this consists of the poorer class of land; while the greater part of the national lands is taken up by mountainous or desert lands, or marshes. At the present time several thousand individuals and a few companies hold the power to exclude a nation of fifteen millions from the best lands of their own country.

The small ranches of the present day originated principally from the division of the national lands which began in 1821, or of the "commons," which started in 1856. Some of the "haciendas" date from the period of the Conquest, (and they have often increased by the acquisition of lands from the division of national lands or of commons) while others are formed from lands that belonged to the nation and which were created in order to benefit fortunate politicians.

It now remains for us to explain the origin of the vast possessions of the Land Companies.

European capital, not Spanish, began to pour into Mexico at the same time that the new Creoles began to settle here, after the year 1821; but foreign wealth was invested principally in mining and commercial ventures. Although the first railroad, from Vera Cruz to Mexico City, was completed in 1873, it was only when the Central Railway (Mexico City to El Paso) was finally in operation in the year 1884, that the real influx of foreign capital into the country began.

Besides mines and railroads, ranches and woods offered great and sure sources of profit. The best woods were the property of feudal landowners who generally refused to sell, since they had kept their "haciendas" with an eye to political influence and social prestige, sometimes from personal vanity, as well as for the rental value of the property.

After the "haciendas" the best large properties were the undivided commons of the Indians, and very soon the ambitious speculators in land found "defects" in the titles of ownership, and won president Diaz to their side. Between the years 1883 and 1894, a series of decrees was issued under the name of "Leyes de Deslindes" ("Leyes sobre Tierras," 1863 a 1912, Sec. de Fomento, México, D. F.) "Boundary Laws," which ruined financially thousands of Indian villages located principally in the North and the West. The system followed was this: The natural boundaries of the "ejidos," as described in the royal concessions of the year 1573 and following ones, who declared nul, and all the lands of an "ejido" over and above the "sitio" (one square league), were called "demasías," (excess) and liable to public protest and claim.

Then the Mexican politicians established what was known as the "Compañía de Deslindes" (Demarcation companies) with the object of securing concessions from the Federal Government to carry out the survey of a State in whole or in part. In exchange for such survey, (generally cheap, inacurate, or even fraudulent), the company received on account of the concession, two-thirds of the surface of "the excess" which it found within the commons. Not only that, but often, after the topographic survey had been made, the "sitio" for the Indians was allotted from the poorer land, and they were notified that they had to vacate their original grant, or pay rent. If any of them opposed this measure, a force of Rurales was detailed to "re-establish order," and to apprehend or, if necessary, to shoot the recalcitrants.

The surveying companies had also the option to purchase the third left of the national excess, and of any other public lands comprised in their concessions, at a normal price, (usually, 50 cts. Mex. per hectare) under some pretext, such as that of "projected colonization." About one year after a company had secured in this manner all the land which it wanted, it would allege impossibility to colonize; and immediately, the complaisant officials would relieve it of the obligation on payment of a fine amounting to about 25 cts. Mex. per hectare.

Feudal land-holders lost nothing through the surveying operations, and the more ambitious ones had an opportunity for gain, whether as shareholders in the companies, or by annexing to their farms, under some plausible pretext, choice sections of the land which might still have been left within the "commons." These Land Com-

panies were surreptitiously incorporated in the United States or in Europe, with a view to impede any efforts which a native government might make to annul at a future time land titles thus secured.

There exists in Lower California ("Boletín de la Sociedad de Geografía y Estadística, de 1913," by Eng. Manuel Bonilla) an astounding example of the monopoly exercised by these companies, for there three companies are in possession of no less than 78% of the whole area of the territory, that is to say, 93,798 square kilometers, an area larger than that of Ireland, and which is distributed as follows:

Luis Huller & Co.	53,950	Sq. Kilmts.
California & Mexico Land Co., Ltd.	24,883	" "
Flores & Company.	14,965	" "
Total	93,798	" "

The final condition which favored the monopoly of lands, both by families and by companies, during the Diaz regime, was the lack of equity in the allotment of the taxes, due to the fact that the largest landholders were the ones who had most to say in regard to taxation. It seems incredible, but there are cases—not infrequent—where the small landed agriculturists paid on their holdings 12% more per hectare than the large farmer nearby, although the quality of the land was exactly the same. We find, for example, that Enriquez ("Problemas Nacionales," by Lic. Enrique Molina Enríquez' México, D. F.) cites as typical cases in the State of Mexico, the tax imposed on three farms as follows:

	Area Hectares	Real Value	Value declared
La Gavia	113,000	$5.000,000	$362,695
San Nicolás.	16,200	2.000,000	417,790
Arroyozarco	27,800	1.500,000	378,981

	Tax due at 1.2%	Tax imposed
La Gavia	$720,000	$45,523
San Nicolás	240,000	50,135
Arroyozarco	180,000	45,467

	Loss to the State by fraud	Owner's Savings
La Gavia	$676,477	94%
San Nicolás	189,865	79%
Arroyozarco	134,533	75%

Mentality of the Mexicans' Forefathers

By ROBERT BRUCE BRINSMADE
Mining Engineer, born in New York in 1871 — He has been living in Mexico since 1911 and is perfectly acquainted with conditions there.

The majority of men do not think, because they are compelled to spend all their energy in the struggle for life, and they have no time left for thinking. The majority accepts everything that exists as inevitable, natural and current. This is what makes so hard the task of the social reformer, and converts his way into a Way of the Cross. This is what brings the jeers of the powerful and the curses of the rabble on those who dare to be the first to raise their voice in the defense of a truth.—HENRY GEORGE.

The basis of national progress is the education of the young, since in no other way can we transmit to future generations the knowledge inherited and acquired by the present one. In order to investigate the causes of the backwardness of education in Mexico, we must study the history of the European and Indian races which were the ancestors of the Mexicans, and investigate their intellectual peculiarities.

Mediaeval Anahuac.

Archaeology has demonstrated that man began his own history on the plane of animals, and has made his way from savagery to civilization by means of the slow accumulation of experimental knowledge. Morgan (1) estimates that the period of five thousand years comprised in written history is less than one-fifth per cent. (1/5%) of the period during which man, as such, has dwelled on the earth. Every existing nation is the outcome of savage ancestors, and the periods of civilization through which every nation has passed in order to reach its present state may be classified as follows:

---

(1) "Ancient Sociology" by Daniel Morgan, U. S. A.

TABLE XIX.

Order	State	Grade	Knowledge acquired	Example
1	Savage	Low	Vegetable food, articulate language.	Man at the pleocene age.
2	Savage	Medium	Fish, food, use of fire.	Polynesians.
3	Savage	High	Animal food, use of bows and arrows.	Athapascans.
4	Barbarians	Low	Agriculture, huts, pottery.	Iroquois.
5	Barbarians	Medium	Irrigation, domestic animals.	Aztecs, Incas.
6	Barbarians	High	Use of metals, temples.	Homeric Greeks.
7	Civilized	Low	Phonetic Alphabet, land owners.	Spaniards in 1521.
8	Civilized	Medium	Natural Sciences, application of Steam.	Contemporary Frenchmen.

The Spanish chroniclers judged the Aztecs as "civilized" due to the ignorance of the former in archeological matters. Their observations were so erroneous that they described the indeterminate Aztec confederation of the democratic tribes as an "empire", the warrior chief Montezuma as a "monarch", and his associates, the chiefs of the tribes, as "feudal lords". This error of the Spaniards has been adopted by Prescott in his interesting histories (2). Morgan says: "Spanish chroniclers deserve credit in what relates to the acts of the Spaniards or to the weapons, tools, industries, food, etc., of the Indians; but in what relates to the Indian government, social relations, and political economy, these chronicles are absolutely worthless."

At the time of the Conquest, the Indians did not know the uses of iron; but they worked softer metals such as copper; they traded by means of exchange of goods, for money was unknown among them; they used irrigation for cultivation of their lands; wove coarse materials with cotton and feathers; built mud and stone houses, and made excellent pottery. They owned the lands in common; they dwelled in the houses by family groups; they prepared only one meal per day, which was served first to the men; they lacked chairs and tables. The Indians practised drawing, and had a marvellous knowledge of astronomy.

Consequently the Spaniards may refute the charge generally made against them, that they destroyed Aztec civilization, since the latter did not exist. Their sins in Mexico have been much more sins of omission than of commission. Considering the Indian as a domestic animal, they taught him the vices, and not the virtues of civilization; their selfish Colonial Government is still reflected in the suffering of the masses in Mexico. The failure of the Spaniards lies in not shouldering the task of the "white man," that of civilizing the Aztecs, and it can be appreciated by a glance at history.

Mediaeval Spain.

In the times of Christ, the Iberian Peninsula was one of the civilized countries forming part of the Roman Empire, with a population of Iberians, Celts, and Italians. During the decadence of Rome, after the IVth century, the peninsula was invaded by different barbarous tribes of Teutons, especially Vandals and Visigoths. The latter settled in the Northern part of Spain, founding there a kingdom in the year 415, and spread over the whole peninsula during the following three centuries, although merely in the character of a reigning caste, since the conquered Latins formed the bulk of the nation. (1).

In the year 1711 the Visigoth kingdom was overturned by the Mohamedan invader coming from Africa, who established a Moorish empire destined to subsist for about eight hundred years. The Visigoth chieftains were not exterminated, but they took refuge in the provinces of Asturias, Biscayan Galicia, Navarre, and Aragon. There they lived isolated, secure in the mountains, but deprived of all the advantages of civilization; and the poor and ignorant Christians, guided by their fanatical priests, undertook an incessant and inhuman war against the Moors. The conflict did not end until the year 1492, when Granada, the last Morish bulkwark in Spain, was taken by King Ferdinand V.

The Spanish Inquisition.

When Mexico was conquered in 1521, Charles V. ruled over Spain as successor to Ferdinand V., and due to the possessions of the empire in America, a wonderful century of material grandeur began for Spain. But it already nourished at its breast a monster destined to bring about its ruin; the Inquisition. This famous body was instituted in permanent form by Pope Innocent III. in the year 1215. At first the Church employed it with the help of the Government, as an instrument against heresy. Its appalling possibilities as a political lever were not understood until it became a tool in the hands of the Spanish Crown in 1478. Under the reigns of Ferdinand V. and Charles V., the Inquisition became the principal means of support of their autocratic power throughout their vast empire, which comprised almost all the world. It helped to unify the primitive seven Christian kingdoms of Spain, and convert them into a single fanatical State; it enriched the Royal Treasury with the

(1). "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire", by Gibbons.

(2). "Ferdinand and Isabella", 1837 "Conquest of Mexico", 1843—Conquest of Peru", 1847, by W. H. Prescott.

properties of those it declared heretics and smothered political and religious dissensions. For the fulfillment of its decrees, recourse was had to the most outrageous and sanguinary methods, and secret torments ended only in public execution. It is estimated that in Spain alone, in the period from the year 1481 till its abolition in 1808 by Napoleon, the Inquisition had ordered the burning alive of 31,912 individuals and had inflicted odious punishments on 291,456. Its short domination in the Low Countries during the reign of Charles V. cost 100,000 lives of "heretics", who perished under the ax, on the gallows, or by fire. (1).

The reason which led the Spaniards to support through three hundred years such a diabolical institution, which no other Catholic country would have maintained even for ten years, was that, during a religious war which lasted over eight centuries, the people had been taught by their priests that heretics were ouside the pale of humankind. Bound by the friars in the double chains of superstition and ignorance, the Spaniards became the abject slaves of the Church and the King, ready to commit any crime, however frightful.

In the New World also, with savage ferocity, they hounded the unbelievers, and the Antilles were depopulated in the period of one century. The Mexican Indians would have disappeared, too, had it not been for the partisans of the virtuous Father Bartolome Las Casas, who secured from the Spanish Crown, the Law of Commons.

The Inquisition, expelling with refined cruelty the Jews and the Moors from Spain at the beginning of the XVIth century, occasioned the ruin of Spanish industries. Those inoffensive people formed the industrial middle class which, through its artisans and gardeners, had caused industry and agriculture to prosper. Their absence left a vacuum between the nobility and the clergy in the upper class, and the laborers below. The privileged classes were too proud to work, and the masses too incapable of working productively without efficient direction. Industry lan-

Colonial Fountain built by the Indians at the terminal of the Chapultepec Aqueduct, Mexico, D. F.

(1). "Inquisition", in Vol. IV. of Johnson's "Cyclopedia", U. S. A.

guished, factories were closed, lands were abandoned. In the meantime, church buildings and priests multiplied, and thousands of laborers, driven to want, turned into bandits or beggars.

Modern Spain.

Whether one believes that the great men are the creators or the creatures of the progressive movements of humanity, it is a fact that they are essential concomitants of such progress, which would not be possible without them. Consequently, the Inquisition, by its careful elimination, during nine generations, of the independent thinkers in the Spanish Dominions at a rate of about one thousand a year, did exactly the reverse to what the gardener does when weeding, since that institution made away with the fine plants, leaving the weeds.

The destruction of intelligent individuals carried out by the Inquisition has been denied by some Spaniards, who point out the numerous native poets, artists, musicians, painters, novelists; but this defense fails, because not all superior people were eliminated by the Inquisitors, but only a certain class of them. The principal victims were the intellectuals in the scientific realm, who asked: "why?" "whereof?" as well as all those parties of independent mind or nonconformists who refused to approve any political or religious acts, unless they were in accordance with morals. By the destruction of scientists, the Inquisition made away with that part of humanity which makes discoveries and inventions; by suppressing the nonconformists, it put an end to that type of men who maintain liberty of conscience and who help democratic governments to attain success.

Spain has not yet recovered from the harm caused by the expulsion of the middle class, the extermination of the scientists and nonconformists. Its masses carry the weight of the upper clergy and nobility; and in the meantime, factories, mines, lands are in the hands of foreigners, who themselves manage these properties. The educated class in Spain is still too proud to work, and consequently, must live by foul or fair means; legacies or cheating. Many of these individuals, lacking legacies, rush into public office, and the result is prevalent corruption and inefficiency therein. It is only since Spain had the fortune to lose its last colonies in 1899, that it is beginning to reform; but it must go through a long and arduous apprenticeship in order to reach the same degree of culture prevailing in France or Northern Italy.

The law of heredity explains the present condition of Spain. Galton (1) demonstrated, a half-century ago, that intellectual faculties are transmitted in the human family in the same manner in which certain peculiarities are inherited in the animal species; and that it is just as possible by judicious marriages, to produce a race of men highly endowed, as it is feasible to create a notable race of horses or dogs. Galton, after a careful study of many eminent Englishmen, arrived at the conclusion that at least fifty per cent. of the mental faculties of these men were atavic. Lately, Woods (2) has investigated the genealogy of 832 members of royal families in Europe, and he found that about 90% of their intellectual qualities and about 50% of their moral qualities were derived from their forefathers.

Modern Mexico.

During the Colonial epoch, Mexico suffered, with other Spanish colonies, the cruelties of the Inquisition, established in the City of Mexico shortly after the Conquest. The contempt of the feudal warriors for manual labor was also prevalent in the educated classes of the colony, although an exception was made with respect to mines, which were exploited by Spanish Creoles more as a military adventure than on a commercial basis. Although Mexico secured its independence in the year 1821, it was not until 1857 that it was freed from the Clericals' yoke by the Laws of Reform (3); and this freedom lasted only a few years, for freedom of thought was quickly repressed shortly after the accession of Diaz to power in the year 1876.

Mentality of the Indians.

The history which I have cited abounds in hopes for the mental future of the native races. The Indians of the Commonal lands have not degenerated

---

(1). "Hereditary Genius", by F. Galton, and "Descent of Man", by Darwin, U. S. A.

(2). "Mental and Moral Heredity in Royalty", by F. A. Woods, in "Popular Science Monthly", New York, August, 1912.

(3). "Codigo de la Reforma", by Blas J. Alatorre, Mexico, D. F.

from a previous civilized state, they are still in the same condition of barbarism and lack of culture (Table XX), merely because they have never been helped by the white man to rise out of that condition. It is true that many of the peons on the farms and in the cities are degraded by slavery and alcoholism, but the notable aptitudes they have shown for industry and mechanical work indicate that the natural artistic gift of the Indian can be successfully applied to the modern system of production. The fact that a statesman like Benito Juarez came from a family of pure Indians, is a demonstration that the present intellectual state of the Indian is not the result of an organic inferiority, but of lack of education and culture.

Why is a Government Needed in Mexico?

By M. C. ROLLAND

(A reply to those who are clamoring for a Government in Mexico.)

Has there ever existed a government in Mexico? Has there ever been a legitimate Congress there? Has the Law been effective in Mexico? Has the Constitution ever been in force? What do those people who are clamoring for a Constitutional Government, **call government,** and what do those Americans who demand responsible authority in Mexico, **call government?**

The Mexican people, conquered by the Spaniards, was merely a subject for exploitation by reason of conquest. Its lands were all distributed among the soldiers and the clergy. It was said that the Indian lacked a soul. What was called "Government" **then,** was merely the will of the Spanish King and his viceroys. The existence of Law was a myth. Nevertheless, that horde of exploiters, soldiers, clericals, lawyers and land-holders called that systematic exploitation a "government," but the people never had a voice in political affairs, however deeply matters affected them.

But the people revolted, under the guidance of a priest. That priest was killed by the church; and by a refined cruelty, his head was put on a spear and exposed for weeks to the public gaze. But the peons, the Indians deprived of their lands, had supported this priest in the struggle, and it was they who continued the work of revolt. When the land-holders could resist no longer, they affected a compromise, and by means of a tri-colored flag deceived the people. They agreed to have a **government,** but in reality it was the same old tyrannical ruling, with a different face, a changed appearance, and another form; and so, the people had secured no redress, conquered no advantages.

One hundred and sixteen years have passed since that first revolution. The people, hungry and in rags, has fought instinctively against its oppressors, winning, one by one, its rights amid fearful strife.

The Laws of Reform were the first formal step towards the liberation of the people's conscience; a step which France took only forty years later. At that time, (1857), the Catholic Church experienced the severest blow to its pocket-book.

Previous to these laws, the church was the national banker. Nine-tenths of the republic was in the hands of the clergy. But in 1859, the church was forced to part with the lands. The struggle was terrific. The church fought, and with the cry of "Religion and Privileges," almost drowned the country in blood.

Somehow the Clerical Party was repressed; but it soon found the means of re-organization, as well as of monopolizing the lands in an underhand way, but, however, in violation of the law.

In the meantime, **what was the government?** There existed a "Constitution," which when it was not being openly violated, was being misapplied. The people were still under the will of those who rose to power, and in the hands of the clergy which exacted "tithes."

The struggle persisted, and we have seen it at its height during the last events in Mexico.

Justice has been an empty word on the other side of the Rio Grande. The people, swayed by the leaders, has always paid with its blood, but has never secured a "government"; it has never had an honorable representation; the Mexicans have never had guarantees, nor have they learned what liberty really is. They have always **maintained** an ideal of liberation, which at the bottom is only economic freedom, but **they have always been**

deceived by a farcical representation which they have been told is "government."

In truth, the only government they have had, has been that of the land-holders, in conspiracy with the church, which in itself is a land-holder too. The people have been tied to this yoke, and they have cared very little about it, because they know, and they have known, that the landed proprietor is very powerful, the owner of houses is unconquerable, the controller of concessions over which a slip of paper gives him title, is a sacred individual.

This is the "government," under different disguises, that Mexico has had! of "government" in Mexico. **It will again be a farce.**

But the present Revolution, having seen all this, appreciates its importance and is trying to help the people. This work of reconstruction is gigantic. The big interests, the Catholic church, the old politicians, the intellectuals and the defeated ones, who servilely obeyed their masters, are clamoring for a government. But they want the same old fictitious one. They know that they cannot enter through any other door. They are clever; they know how to carry elections; they can handle a congress; they can decree laws **for the people,** by means of which they rob the people of its rights; and

The Government Palace in Mexico City

For this reason, the Mexican people care very little to have a Constitution effective in name only. If the economic processes do not change, things will be the same as ever, that is, it will be as though no Constitution existed.

If small landed interest is not created, if the land is not given back to the people, if an equitable tax on the present land-holders is not established, in order to make them relinquish their prey; if, in a word, the fortress of the Mexican family is not built by means of the communion of the peon with the land, it will be senseless to speak that is why they are clamoring for the so-called "Reign of the Constitution."

That is why they wanted Villa, even as a President. They covered themselves with the Constitution, even with Huerta at the head. The foreigners want the farce of a Congress and of a Constitution, because this will lend force to the concessions they enjoy.

But, gentlemen, the Mexican people, the people who know that they have lived without a government, and without constitutions, the people who know that these were merely shields to protect those who struck blows at them,

what would these people want a "government" for?

What the Mexican people want is lands, a more human tax system, and a greater economic freedom, especially in the Municipalities.

What is the use of organizing the same farce, since we are all conscious of what it conceals?

Everyone is exerting pressure, because politics is almost an obsession; so the Revolution may be obliged to organize something to satisfy those individuals who dream of a **respectable government**; but we should not lose sight of the fact that the only salvation of Mexico lies in the change of its economic government. Only when the Mexican family is economically freed, that is, only when the present land-holder and the clerical party which is owner of tenement houses and large farms, are held in subjection, and only when the Mexican Law will be able to control the foreigners' concessions, then, and only then, will we be able to speak with some respect of the true "government" of Mexico, as being the genuine representative of the people. It is only when this is accomplished that foreigners may be able to have confidence in the Mexican Congress and the government.

The Intrigues of the Clergy Against the Monroe Doctrine

Surprises of Intervention; for President Wilson, for the Bankers of Wall Street, and for the American People.

At the time when the international question between Mexico and the United States seems about to reach a decisive solution, it would not be superfluous if both the American and Mexican people and their statesmen tried to disentangle all the important matters directly related to the present conflict.

It would be well, first, although it is no easy task, to cast some light upon the intrigues of the clergy, of the landholders, and of Wall Street bankers.

The directors of North-American policies would not try to engage in the perilous adventure of intervention in Mexico, the risks of which they do not appreciate in full, were they not tempted by the expectation of financial compensations which exist only paradoxically.

Mexican reactionaries are developing in the United States, among the Wall Street bankers, a labor analogous to the one they undertook in connection with Villa and Zapata. To the latter, they offered land for the Indians, an offer which they could never have fulfilled. They dazzled the eyes of the former, offering a chance for fabulously rich enterprises that would yield millions, enterprises with which the American press is already busying itself, and which are nothing more than a mirage.

Where, what are those millions?

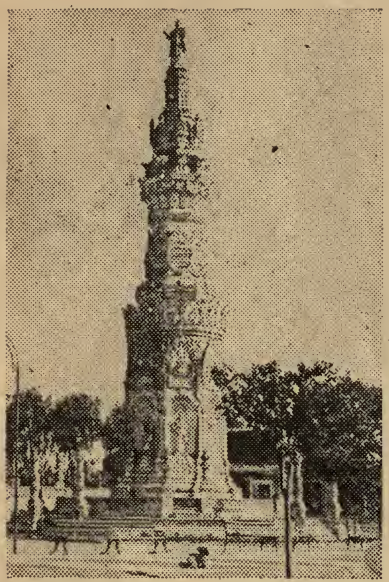
The perfidious arguments of the treacherous suggestion are the following: "Due to the acute economic crisis in Mexico, creditors and debtors are in conflict; the farmers, principally, are, and for a long time to come will be, unable to cover the interest on their mortgages. The total value of mortgages in Mexico is about eight hundred million pesos, Mexican currency; the value of the farms is about ten or fifteen million. By the purchase of the mortgages of the Farms direct, just at this time of crisis, the best land of Mexico could be secured at a ridiculous price. Similar negotiations could be undertaken concerning real estate and all kinds of industries. In order to secure this, it is not necessary to carry on a lengthy war, but simply to spend enough money to reach the Capitol, which is the seat of the more important businesses. Wall Street, financing intervention, would reap a bountiful crop, running into **thousands of millions.** And as Mexico is starving, she cannot offer a strong resistance to the Americans."

Money, arms, ammunition, would not be lacking in order to fight intervention. We will herafter explain how the Reaction itself would furnish them. Starvation would have nothing to do with the resistance of Mexicans: throughout our whole history, our endurance as fighters has been demonstrated in full, from the time of the destruction of the great Tenoxtitlán, to date, by thousands of episodes, and it will perhaps be opportune to cite one which has all the simplicity of Spartan heroism:

A **parlementaire** sent by the conquerors approached a group of Aztecs who were defending one of the last redoubts of the Great Tenoxtitlan, the Troy of America, where Mexico City stands now, with the object of persuading them to surrender, as it was apparent that they lacked, not only physical strength to continue the combat, but even the simplest food, and that they would soon be vanquished. The chief of those heroes, emaciated and almost exhausted, took from under his blanket a few **tortillas** they had left, and throwing them into the face of the Spanish emissary, exclaimed: "There is our last mouthful, since you

refer to eatables. We are ready to fight with you and yours to the last gasp!"

The warlike virtues of the Mexicans, the only thing which foreigners have been unable to wrest from us, are still intact, as has been fully demonstrated by the Constitutionalist soldiers during the internal strife, and this might give a slight idea that it is no easy task to try to trample on our national sovereignty, nor would that be a task requiring little time. But even supposing that all military difficulties were smoothed down, the first surprise



Monument Erected to the Memory of Pio IX, Built of Clay by the Indians on the Shore of Lake Chapala, Jalisco, Mexico

that the ambitious instigators of intervention would meet, would be that no mortgage, no farm, no business really important would be placed on the market at the call of the dollar.

If any landowners, Mexican or foreign, having their properties mortgaged, should sell their rights to American purchasers, the clauses of Mexican mortgage deeds are so drastic, that all the advantages would be in favor of the creditors and in no wise of the foreign acquirer.

If, in order to benefit the latter, recourse were had to some expedient which would violate the contracts, this would be a sufficient reason to bring about protests from the principal European countries, alleging damage to their nationals. This would be inevitable.

We say inevitable, because the capital placed at interest in Mexico is, by more than eighty per cent. the property of one creditor only: the clergy.

And the clergy, within Mexico, has "Europeanized" its interests. How? By making loans in the name of European bankers, and pretending that the capital which supports and gives life to business here, is capital belonging to the clients of said bankers, the savings of Frenchmen, Englishmen, Belgians, etc., etc., etc.

In order that each and every one who reads may be convinced of the truth of the foregoing statements and that they are not the product of a feverish imagination, we shall briefly state the foundation on which they are solidly established.

During the period of the Viceroys, through concessions granted by the Spanish Crown and through the fanaticism of the conquered race, the clergy, for three centuries, accumulated wealth.

These interests were not affected either by the war of independence or by events after that period; on the contrary, the immoderate increase of them occasioned untold misery.

The Reform brought about the disentail and nationalism of the property of the clergy; but this work could not be carried to completion because a large part of this wealth was rescued from such a fate by placing it in the name of certain private parties who enjoyed the confidence of the Church.

Throughout all the governments that came after the Reform, and especially during the Diaz dictatorship, the clergy has continued increasing its wealth, and has even recovered a part of the properties expropriated, by means of the "contenta," that is, the partial restitution of property which relieves the consciences of many of the old adjudicatees or their heirs.

In many other ways, the clergy has obtained incomes vastly superior to its expenses: legacies, life donations, dowries for the support of nuns, obtained from aristocratic ladies, which dowries, at the death of the nuns, revert to the Church. These amounts are incalculable. There is, however,

the possibility of making an approximate calculation of one of these sources of income, that of the "tithe," imposed upon the Indians in the sections where they are more fanatical; this "tithe" represents one-tenth per cent. of the assets of each individual, whether this consists of salary, wages, cereals, poultry, etc., etc., as the people have been imbued with the belief that they have to contribute towards the support of the Church. The basis for this calculation is the following: Two hundred working days in the year, twenty-five cents income per day per Indian, and four million contributing Indians; these figures being a very conservative minimum. The resulting income, for the sixty years previous to the Revolution, amounts to the portentous amount of twelve hundred million pesos silver!

It is evident to any economist, that one cannot suppose that these fabulous quantities of money have been sent out of Mexico and placed in some other country; because, then, on account of the influence the Mexican clergy through its money would wield in that part of the world, one could conjecture where it was placed.

But it is not so, and on the other hand, every one knows with certitude of the vast influence which the Mexican clergy wields in Mexican affairs; hence it is permissible to suppose that the wealth of the Mexican clergy is within Mexico.

But it is a well known fact that Mexicans in general have no money, that the majority of the businesses in the country are in the hands of foreigners; it is permissible, therefore, to conclude that at least a very large portion of the clergy's money is in the hands of foreigners in Mexico, a belief supported by the fact that the clergy has no known property, no capital placed in its own name, since the laws forbid it to own any property.

This grievous alienation has been carried out in two ways equally disastrous for the national interests. The one, as stated above, consists in placing the money under the protection of European flags by means of their banking firms, and the other in facilitating extensive credit to foreigners, especially to Europeans, and refusing it to Mexicans, with the very rare exception of exceedingly wealthy individuals or such as, through their antecedents, deserve the full confidence of the Church.

Only one branch of public wealth is under the control of the clergy: that comprising farms (haciendas). By means of mortgages it has promoted the organization of large rural estates with a double end in view: to have in the land-holders a tool to retain laborers on the property in a condition of practical serfdom, sunk in ignorance and want; and to exert through them an indirect influence on public affairs, in the electoral farce for the appointment of governors, etc., so that no local or general government could direct public administration favorably to the real popular interests, as should have been done in a country the institutions of which are liberal, republican, democratic — inspired, in one word, by the same institutions which govern the American people.

Is there anything more natural and in accordance with the rights of man than that the Mexican people, oppressed under the inflexible yoke of its insatiable secular tyrants, should at last revolt against it?

The Reaction, having exhausted all kinds of tricks, of intrigues, to divide the Constitutionalists, finding itself incapacitated from recovering its ancient power, works twofold at the present time: at home, feverishly pushing the economic campaign which it is carrying on in order to deprive the Constitutionalist Government of means of support; and outside the Mexican frontier, exerting itself in every way, having on its lips the kiss of Judas.

At the present moment, like a siren, it chants a golden song in the ears of Wall Street bankers. Should it succeed and induce the latter, dazzled by the mirage of those fabulous thousands of millions, to play its game, the Reaction would be the first to furnish arms, ammunition, and money to the Mexicans, so that they would oppose stubbornly the American intervention; a fact of which the Reaction is fully confident, as it knows only too well, the significance of the word "PATRIA" (Mother-country) for us Mexicans.

In due time, the Reaction would then call in London, in Berlin, in Paris, in Tokio even; it would work in those Chancellories as actively as it does now in the United States, and exclaim: "Now or never! Go, bring peace between Mexicans and Americans, or

fight against the latter; and pretending to defend the Mexicans in order to secure their help, come to Mexico and protect your interests!"

Where, then, would be the Monroe Doctrine?

The Reactionaries pre-suppose that at the end of the butchery, the Mexican Revolution would be vanquished, and that the Reaction itself would then reconstruct Mexico, in accord with Europe—as was the idea of Napoleon III when he gave his support to the ephemeral ambition of Maximillian—as a barrier against the aggrandizement of the United States, but one built now on a solid foundation: the Europeanization of the wealth of the Mexican clergy.

It is necessary for the equanimity of North American statesmen to avoid falling into this trap, now fully exposed; and as regards Mexico's internal problem, in order that this question should not continue a menace to the harmonious relations of both countries, it must be recognized as the sole affair of the Revolution which, while solving it, must remember the serene and profound maxim of Juárez: "The respect of others' rights is peace."

If the United States desires to secure lawful advantages in Latin-American countries, she must adopt a policy of sincere friendship, and, beginning with Mexico, she should not commit, by an unjust attack on our sovereignty, the grievous blunder of creating in the New World evils as serious as those which at the present time are bleeding and ruining the Old.

President Wilson, the Wall Street bankers, and the American people should meditate on the surprises which Intervention in Mexico might reserve for them, and they should endeavor to appreciate to its fullest extent, the significance which the Mexican Revolution has for us, for themselves, and for all Latin-America.

(El Pueblo, Mex.)

The Holocaust

Stanford University, Cal.
July 21, 1916.

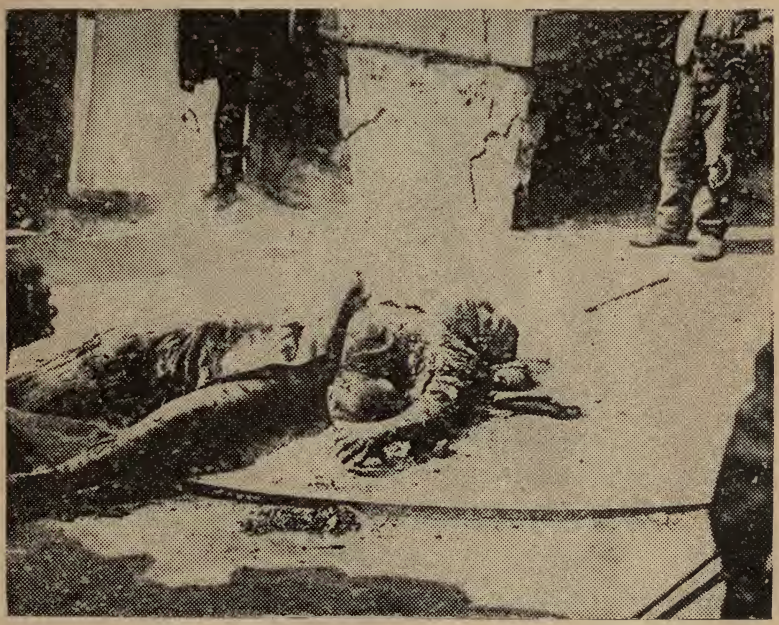
Mr. Paul U. Kellogg,
"The Survey,"
New York City.

Dear Mr. Kellogg:

Since the danger of International war is averted, the war-makers along the Rio Grande are falling out with each other. All the following points, in one form or another, appear in the El Paso press.

The "Times" charges in turn that Lea, as attorney for Huerta, while holding office as Mayor, did nothing for his client. The exiled dictator "spent some of the hottest days in 1915 in a sweltering cell at the El Paso County jail, and died a prisoner of the United States, having never enjoyed a moment of freedom from the time his attorney was engaged until his death."

(El Paso "Times," July 18.)



A Mexican's Body Being Burned

Tom Lea, Mayor, has charged that signed receipts found in Villa's papers taken at Juarez, and now in the Mexican Consulate, show that the El Paso "Times," the special organ of the Interventionists, received a $10,000 subsidy from Villa. This the "Times" vigorously denies.

Mr. Don Johnson, Chief of Police of El Paso, claims that he was removed by Mr. Lea because he would not support a policy by which Mexicans in El Paso are made to contribute political revenues by false arrest. The claims that Lea rounded up a large number of Mexicans in El Paso as "suspected

Villistas," men who had been admitted to the country by the national immigration authorities, and whose conduct was under observation of the United States Secret Service at El Paso.

On March 6th a number of these Mexicans, (some twenty, I am told), were in jail in El Paso. Part of them probably bearing lice, all were given a bath in gasoline. Some one lit a match and the affair, known as "The Holocaust," occurred. All were burned alive, with the building, and, it is said, two or three American hoboes. This the Mayor called an "unavoidable accident," but the Mexicans in Juarez believed that it was done deliberately. The word came to Villa, and three days later he raided Columbus. Villa declared beforehand that he was going to "make torches" of every American he found.

Mr. Johnson wants to know "if Mr. Lea expects every man from across the river who has means to employ a lawyer is to be arrested. I want to know if he fired me because Medinaveita and Banda had to pay $3,500 to get out of jail. Did Mr. Lea fire me because I would not join the regiment he was forming to go into Mexico."

(El Paso "Times," July 15.)

Mr. C. L. Vowell (in the El Paso "Times" of July 18) accuses the Mayor of being responsible for the gasoline bath, by which, he declares, "in the city jail twenty to twenty-five human beings were burned to death through somebody's neglect. * * * For that one fact that appalled the civilized world, caused hearts to stand still, tears to start from women's eyes; that one fact branded somebody as careless, negligent, incompetent. And, Tom Lea, if that be treason, you can make the most of it."

Very truly yours,

DAVID STARR JORDAN.

Women in Mexico

By M. C. ROLLAND

The history of Women in the Latin-American countries is a page full of sadness.

If the condition of the aboriginal, conquered by the Spaniards, tortured by the Inquisition, and later on dragging out a miserable existence under the **cacicazgo** régime, is a story to fill one with pity and horror, what can be said of the story of woman, sarcastically called "the companion of the Lord of Nature"?

Every one knows, generally, that throughout the world, woman has followed in man's tracks in the conquest of her rights; but it is necessary to study a little what has happened in America, in order to be able to understand the meaning of the transformation in public sentiment and in economic conditions brought about by the revolutionary movements which, watched from the United States through the big interests, through the lenses of capitalists, are considered merely as disintegrating effervescence, as a chaotic movement destined to be stopped by a more advanced civilization.

The most typical case of woman's evolution from a beast of burden into a human being, may be observed characteristically in Mexico, where the revolution of these later years makes evident what we might call an "acceleration" of the vindication of woman in America.

As in all Latin-America, in Mexico woman constituted the spoils of war of the conqueror. Hernado Cortez himself presents a historical example of this in his selecting the famous Malitzin, a beautiful Indian, as the companion of his adventures, for whose sake he repudiated his legal wife; some authors even affirming he tried to murder the latter.

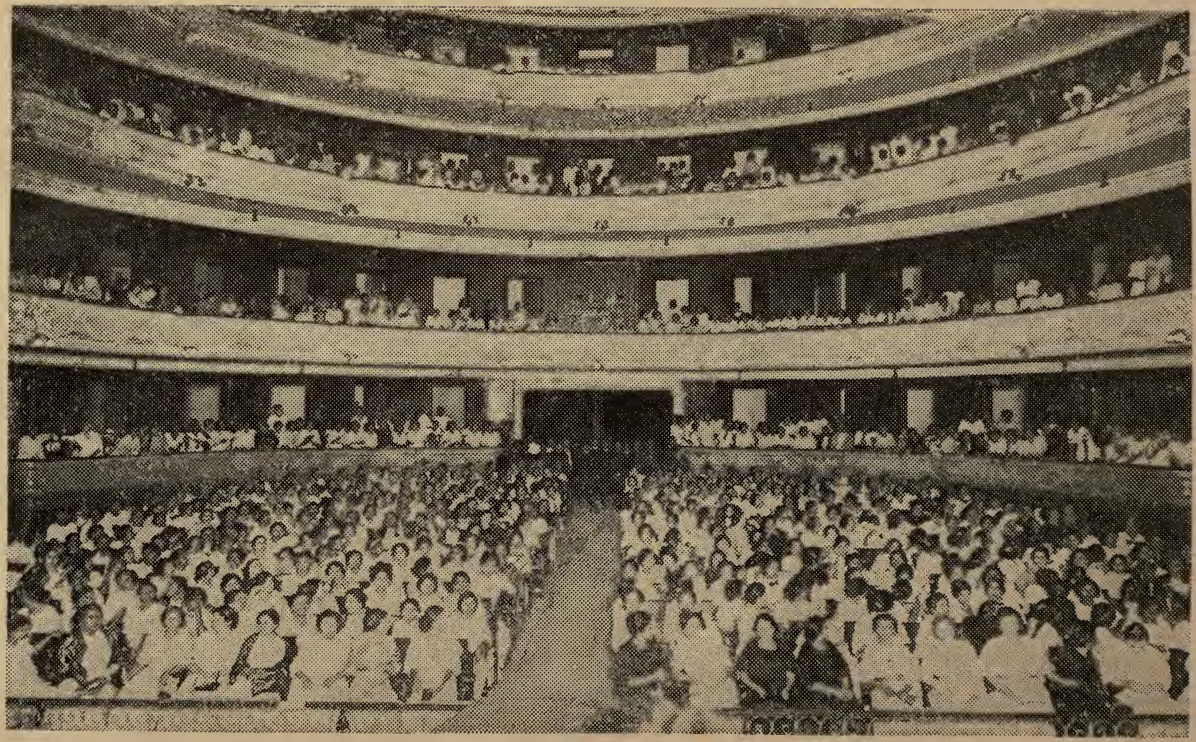
The Spaniards established in the new country the same customs they followed in the mother-country, which they had inherited from the Moors. During the Colonial period, woman was considered the slave of man at home, without any right to go out of the house, to acquire instruction, to be educated; woman was practically dead to the world from the instant in which she was delivered to the man who had chosen her for life.

Woman, however, has accompanied her Mexican countryman with unequalled abnegation, heroism we could say, throughout all the political and economic changes the country has experienced. Doña Josefa Ortiz de Dominguez, wife of the commander of the City of Querétaro, took a leading part in the conspiracy of 1910 for the liberation of the country, and her history is almost a cult in the hearts of Mexican women. Her statue ornaments one of the beautiful public gardens of the City of Mexico.

Practically all Mexican women, from the humblest to the great lady, have adjusted themselves to the circumstances of the various struggles undertaken by men in that country.

In Mexico, two big parties exist: the Liberal Party and the Reactionary Party. Women have been the principal instrument of the Reactionary Party in order to retain its influence in the home. On the other hand the Liberal Party, formed by the thinking portion of the middle class and of the unhappy, disinherited of the earth, has had in woman the sweetest consolation. Our soldiers have always gone to the battlefield accompanied by their women. There never has been a battle, not even a skirmish, in the history of Mexico, wherein woman has not had a part, as she always goes ahead of the soldier, requisitioning food for her man; during the battles, they have often shed their blood while recovering the wounded and even the dead, and after the battle, they have been the tender nurses taking care of the wounded.

In the last few years, the example of the United States and the distribution of the literature of the civilized world among the masses, but especially among the school-mistresses has grad-



The Feminist Congress in the State of Yucatán

ually brought about a deep revolution in the feminine mind. Formerly they belonged to the class of slaves, when, at most, they learned to read and write, even arithmetic being considered not at all necessary for them.

The new feminist movement was looking for new horizons and in the same manner that the peon and the laborer has taken part in the struggle of the last five years in order to conquer their economic well-being, woman has helped the armed movement in the hope of a liberation which should not be too far off.

During this last revolt, there were thousands of women teachers principally, who carried concealed on their bodies, revolutionary proclamations which they distributed in the places where the Diaz, and afterwards the Huerta, rule was predominant. The latter threw into jail scores of them, and started a struggle against the first group of teachers who had organized themselves in order to help the Revolution. The association consisted of three hundred and fifty teachers, who never weakened or rested, in spite of serious dangers. in their efforts to impart faith and enthusiasm to the men in the struggle against dictatorship. Many young girls 15 and 16 years old, were imprisoned because they expressed aloud their sympathy for Madero's widow. A number of women teachers, with Maria Arias at their head, made a collection for the erection of a monument to Madero over his grave; and afterwards went to the battlefield to serve the wounded, as the Red Cross Association does, in contradistinction to the Red Cross of the Aristocracy, which, in the last days of the Diaz rule, at first hesitated to go forward and serve the wounded that belonged to the Revolutionary party, under orders from its President at that time, Doña Luz Gonzales Cosio.

When the revolution at last succeeded, woman took an important step forward: the Law of Divorce was decreed, and the moral effect of this law alone has sufficed to raise the moral level of many households where woman was more of a slave than a free agent.

Mexican women have progressed in all social classes. The old "soldadera" (wife of the soldier), is no longer the dirty ragged woman of yore; at the present time, the soldier's woman—and the soldier himself is no longer one of the forcibly levied—is dressed regularly, wears shoes and does not present that appearance of physical and moral misery which was typical in former times. The working women have organized in different parts of the Republic, constituting groups of real importance.

Women teachers and, in general, women of the middle class, are taking active participation in public affairs, and occupy positions in all public and private offices. At present, women work, earning their living and their economic independence.

The greatest results in this movement have been observed in the State of Yucatán, where a Feminist Congress met recently, consisting of more than two thousand women of the middle class, who, only a short while ago, were enslaved by all kinds of prejudices, and who at this meeting discussed enthusiastically Education, Religion and Physiology, showing in the most unsuspected manner, the strength of the feminine intellect, as well as its moral power by the side of man, to direct the future Mexican family.

This is one aspect of the social commotion which is taking place on the other side of the Rio Grande, one extremely interesting to all students of sociology and an example to all Latin-American countries.

APR 24 1917

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C091970693